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Vulnerability and Public Services in the Lebanese Context of Mass Displacement

A Literature Review

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Introduction

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Objectives

This working paper reviews the literature on infrastructural vulnerabilities in the Lebanese context of mass displacement to answer the following questions:

- What are the particular infrastructural vulnerabilities at stake in contemporary Lebanon?
- Where are the intersections of vulnerabilities caused by displacement and those related to public services, for both migrants and hosts?
- How is vulnerability conceptualised in the literature, and what role are public services and migration seen to play in it?

'Vulnerability' has been a key term in contemporary Lebanon, both in the realm of public services and in the context of mass displacement. Yet often its precise meaning, especially the links between its spatial and social dimensions, are left underexplored (Issa et al., 2014; Stel & van der Molen, 2015). This review seeks to bridge the gap between these dimensions. Such an examination appears particularly pressing today because political, humanitarian, and academic discourses often presume causal connections between the presence of refugees and other precarious migrant communities, and the frail state of the country's public services, often without further investigation. As Lebanon faces a range of ongoing and intensifying crises – related to governance, state finance, and health – the state of public services and the situation of the large number of non-citizens in the country have both become exacerbated. It is therefore vital to examine how the concept of vulnerability connects and interacts with migrants' and hosts' social and spatial experiences of stretched or absent public services.

Conceptually, vulnerability has been viewed as linked to infrastructure in the literature on cities in particular. Because of their ability to connect and disconnect residents from the city, infrastructures function as sites of contestation and negotiation over what is public or private and who is included or excluded (Graham & Marvin, 2001; Rodgers & O'Neill, 2012). Infrastructures can thus create vulnerabilities on several levels: the absence of infrastructure-based public services can create health problems, as well as advancing social stigma, both of which can act as an additional threat

by legitimising dispossession. At the same time, reliance on existing infrastructures can also be viewed as a potential vulnerability. Thus, much of the technical literature understands 'vulnerability' as the potential breakdown of the system itself, rather than the social effects for users of those infrastructures. Thinking of infrastructural circuits as extensions of our bodily selves invokes how intimately connected we are to the city at large, and why the disruption of these infrastructural connections may result in physical and social harm. Such marginalisation, in its more extreme forms, can generate emotional responses of fear and disgust towards those on the margins, which in turn can be used to justify the very inequalities and exclusions that lead to the emotional responses in the first place (cf. Baumann, 2018, Mintchev et al., 2019).

Thus, in the first instance, this review seeks to provide an overview of the way public service and infrastructural provision (or lack thereof) negatively affects residents, including both hosts and migrants, while tracing the historical and political origins of the current situation. In drawing together factual information as presented in literature, this review aims to serve as a resource for those seeking to understand the origins of specific forms of vulnerability and begin to envision alternative approaches. A more nuanced understanding of vulnerability and its various origins and shapes can also inform humanitarian and political debates in which 'vulnerability' often serves as a buzzword but is filled with a range of differing meanings (cf. Sözer, 2020).

Furthermore, by surveying various types of knowledge production and discourse making about these questions, the review aims to provide an overview of the common themes and prevalent arguments, as well as disagreements or debates. We pay particular attention to the divergences and convergences in the connotations of these concepts, and how terms inform perspectives and discourses on the relationship between the living conditions of migrants and the infrastructures and services at their disposal. Examining dominant narratives allows us to understand how displacement and public services are linked in the literature, and how various authors locate vulnerability in individuals, communities, spaces and networks, and, at times, the Lebanese state itself. A discussion of the inconsistencies and critiques and debates reveals key arguments and debates on some of the most pressing political questions facing the country.

Approach

The material consulted for this review focuses on academic literature, including both published work and dissertations, in English, as well as some Arabic-language material. Official government documents, as well as 'grey literature' from the inter- and non-governmental sector, were also consulted and cited where relevant for factual background. We also draw on creative responses such as films and art works that engage with the themes of the literature review.

Under the broad concept of infrastructure, we considered both physical and social systems and networks through which people sustain their lives. The term is thus taken to encompass shelter, land, water, waste management, electricity, and roads, but also access to the social networks and modes of sociality that enable and sustain these. However, health and education services are beyond the scope of this review, as our interest lies in the links between the materiality of the built environment on the one hand and the social effects on the other.

Specific sections of this review switch between layers of displacement, including the internally displaced, labour migrants from Southeast Asia, Africa and Syria, as well as older and more recent waves of forcibly displaced groups including Armenians, Kurds, Palestinians, Iraqis, and of course Syrians. We do this to attend to the common themes and conditions that frame infrastructure-related vulnerabilities for the Lebanese context of mass displacement, which encompasses the conditions and contentions of disenfranchisement and marginalities more broadly.

In reviewing the usage of vulnerability in the literature, we included notions like susceptibility to harm or disruption in the broadest sense – ranging from the individual embodied experience to the community level or the system, be it an ecosystem or a networked infrastructure. While this terminology does not translate literally into Arabic, we identified a wide range of other related terms that are used to discuss these notions in the Arabic-language literature. The Annex includes a glossary of some of these terms, and notes on how they usually figured.

Findings

This review makes the following key observations:

- Much of the literature locates the origins of contemporary infrastructural frailty in the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) and the selective process of reconstruction that followed it.
- Infrastructural vulnerability interacts with other inequalities and divisions in society. It is generally found to exacerbate them, both in terms of practical access to services and in terms of the indirect effects and stigma that arise from lacking public services.
- Infrastructural issues interact with the fragmented nature of the state, the weakness of state services, as well as the sectarian system: they are one of the primary ways in which the former is experienced in everyday life and often reinforce divisions, at times even becoming triggers or tools of inter-sectarian violence.
- The presence of Syrian refugees in particular has been blamed by media as well as political actors for exacerbating Lebanon's long-standing infrastructural crisis. At the same time, refugees and migrants are often the first to experience the negative impact of infrastructural vulnerability. Furthermore, they are often involved in the construction and reconstruction of infrastructure and are key actors providing services such as waste management.

Overview

The first section provides an overview of the key themes arising in the literature on infrastructure. These include the prominent role of sectarianism, the uneven distribution of services, and the privatised solutions people develop in response to insufficient services. In addition, the lack of public service provision reflects the internal contradictions of the state. Section Two examines texts that deal explicitly with networked Infrastructures: water, waste, and electricity. The third section, on migrant space and place, deals with themes of confinement, mobility and contestation. It discusses the literature on the spaces in which refugees and migrants live. Transport infrastructures and (im) mobility reflect the social inequalities embedded in infrastructures and the circulations they enable. We conceptualise public space as a common resource and therefore also discuss the literature on open and market spaces, as well as 'sense of place'. The bibliography, in addition to academic and grey literature, separately lists artworks and films addressing the themes of the review. An Annex provides a glossary of relevant Arabic terms and their English translations.



Key themes In the literature

Wayn al-dawla: vulnerability, infrastructure, and the state

Reflections on the state, the law and citizenship, as well as on the encounter between formal institutions and informal elite systems, and on informal non-elite responses and acts of resistance, permeate literature on infrastructure and public services in Lebanon. Despite the long absence of universal service provision, the lack of infrastructural services is equated with the absence of the state – in particular through the common phrases *wayn al-dawla?* ('where is the state?') or *mafee dawla* ('there is no state'), as noted by multiple authors (Nucho, 2016: 1-2, 127; Obeid, 2014; Obeid, 2015: 435; see also Mouawad & Baumann, 2017). Such literature discusses the claims, especially found in policy discourse, that government institutions are incapable of responding adequately to the infrastructural and service needs of arriving refugees. It shows how this type of discourse props up prevailing notions about the Lebanese state's failings in caring for citizens and migrants alike. Such claims were made as much at the time of Palestinian refugee arrival in 1948 (Khalidi, 2010), as about the Syrian refugee crisis since 2011 (Charafeddine & El-Zein, 2016; see also Government of Lebanon & UN, 2017). Yet the more recent social science scholarship cited above has unpacked and challenged notions of the weakness or absence of the Lebanese state as captured by the phrase *wayn al-dawla?*, by capturing how the state is experienced in the everyday, through its practical and symbolic effects that manifest either in deliberate force or strategic neglect.

There are important efforts to grapple with the materiality and meaning of the Lebanese state and its significance for infrastructural inclusion/exclusion. Amid its long-reputed and misconstrued weakness, proclaimed so because it lacks autonomy and monopoly of power and violence in accordance with Weberian-style criteria of effective statehood, such scholarship has called for a move to take seriously the Lebanese (and any non-European) state as a present empirical and conceptual subject (Mouawad & Baumann, 2017: 61). Obeid, for instance, dismisses the equation of geographic marginality with political marginality, arguing that the mere aspiration for infrastructural inclusion reproduces the modernist belief in the state as provider of normality, even (or especially) in the instance of 'infra-citizenship', or when infrastructure and public service are hard to come by (Obeid, 2015). While Arsan (2018: 110) writes: 'Poor telephone lines and interrupted electricity stood, for many, for the ineptitude of the Lebanese state and the political class that controlled it', Cammett (2015: S83), like Obeid, finds that residents nonetheless still expect better public services from the state: '[C]itizens

express outrage at the failures of the state to deliver, indicating that they retain an ideal standard of stateness in their minds against which they benchmark government performance'. Thus, despite this ongoing failure, 'Lebanese citizens articulate high expectations of their state'. Building on Harb (1998) and paralleled in Fawaz (2009), Roy argues that Hezbollah's urban policies, evident through urban renewal projects conceived as 'civilizing and modernizing frontier[s]', 'is not a counterpoint to Lebanese neoliberalism but rather a partner in it', establishing its majority impoverished Shiite war-displaced constituents and Beirut slum residents as clients rather than citizens (Roy, 2009: 174).

Literature that takes the state seriously in Lebanon notes the so-called 'resilience' or durability of the elite clientelist system that is in place, suggesting one should not look to institutional inefficiency abstractly as its proof (Mouawad, 2017). Rather one finds the state in structures of inconsistency or selectivity of public service provision (Mouawad & Baumann, 2017), or in the spatialisation of sovereignty through the observation of daily practices in public spaces, for instance where the state governs by either extraction or neglect (Saksouk-Sasso, 2015). In her work on Hay al-Krad, the ghetto where Sunni Kurdish migrants settled upon their arrival from Turkey in the 1920s, Mazraani shows how citizen status becomes a shield against socio-economic and political marginality for this community that has historically been subject to ethnic and class stigma. In addition to acquiring access to public entitlements, gaining citizenship – as some but not all were able to do – implied joining clientelist networks and having a patron or *za'eem* (in this case, the Sunni former Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri). Being thus connected gave them more political leverage despite their relegation to a residual enclave of the capital's suburb of Burj al-Barajneh (Mazraani, 2011: 78-80).

Sectarian infrastructures

Several authors highlight the links between infrastructure and sectarianism. Nucho's study (2016) of public services in Bourj Hammoud, a predominantly Armenian municipality just outside Beirut's city limits, shows how sectarianism is not merely reflected in, but actively 'produced as inevitable' (Ibid: 29) through, the built environment, and infrastructure in particular:

'[I]nfrastructures are not just a material representation of how sectarian political parties operate spatially. Rather, in a dialogic process, the channels of service provision are constitutive of a sense of community, while, in turn, a sense of community and belonging reproduces and reiterates the institutional channels and networked connections that created them in the first place' (Nucho, 2016: 127).

She notes that even 19th century infrastructural works – understood as a contest for influence between Ottoman and French investors – created and reinforced class and sectarian divisions (Ibid: 11, see also Hanssen, 2005: 266).

Like Nucho's work, Bou Akar's seminal study of urban planning on Beirut's urban frontiers (2018, see also Bou Akar, 2011) shows how "'sectarianism" is itself spatially and temporally produced' (Ibid: 181). Her overarching argument is that the planning process is 'devoid of the promise of a better future' (Ibid: 8) and is instead a 'war in times of peace' which 'is played out over such issues as land and apartment sales, the occupation of ruins, access to housing, zoning and planning regulations, and infrastructure projects' (Ibid: 9). Planning, on the southern peripheries in particular, has become 'an exercise in spatializing sectarian difference' rather than a process aiming at development or an attempt to move towards spatial justice (Ibid: 174).

Sectarian informal organisations and development agencies play a key role in the distribution of services. Bou Akar (2018) views Hezbollah as 'part of the state' but also 'part of the private service sector': '[I]n this latter role, its affiliates offer goods and services not available from the state, including

affordable health care, access to water wells, low-interest loans, and low-cost housing for families in need' (Ibid: 179). For instance, in Sahra Choueifat, Hezbollah and Amal, together with residents and developers, built the water, sewage and electricity infrastructure that the municipality did not provide (Ibid: 69). Arsan (2018), too, notes how Jihad al-Bina, Hezbollah's 'foundation for development and construction', makes 'up for the infrastructural shortcomings and absences of the Lebanese state' by providing waste removal and electricity in Beirut (Ibid: 164-5).

Infrastructure and conflict

The manner in which Bou Akar describes the future-orientation of planning processes on Beirut's frontiers relates to infrastructural vulnerability in two ways. On the one hand, in planning for a future envisioned as inevitably violent, sectarian urban institutions aim to minimise their own vulnerability through spatial means. They seek to solidify their grasp on particular territories through urban planning and infrastructure construction in order to bolster their own geographic hold, suggesting they see potential harm to their cause in the heterogeneity of neighbourhoods, or in the porosity of intra-urban boundaries. On the other hand, in that this type of planning 'forecloses the possibility of urban politics outside a sectarian order', as Bou Akar puts it (Ibid: 10), it entrenches Lebanon's sectarian system, which several authors consider to be the deeper origin of political instability and residents' infrastructural vulnerability.

This fragility, and the potential of sectarian infrastructures to become triggers of violence, came to the fore when a dispute over a telecommunications network Hezbollah had installed at the Beirut airport 'almost led to civil war' in 2008 (Arsan, 2018: 103, see also 91-98). There were renewed debates around Hezbollah's Telecom network in nearby Aramoun in 2011 (Bou Akar, 2018: 126-8). Highlighting the blurred boundaries between formality and informality in sectarian infrastructure provision, Bou Akar explains the perceived difference between this latter infrastructure and work carried out by the Future Movement in the same area as follows: while the latter intervened through formal channels and (inter)national funding sources – even if aiming development at 'their' sectarian clientele – Hezbollah's public works took place 'outside the state'. 'This highlights', she argues, 'how, in a contested geography, what may be seen as official or formal (versus unofficial and informal) may be largely a function of power relations at the time' (Bou Akar, 2018: 127, see also 116).

In addition, public infrastructural systems have been the targets of attacks in order to exert pressure on civilian residents. Such 'infrastructural warfare' (Graham, 2010) has taken place during the civil war, during repeated Israeli attacks, as well as during fighting between Palestinian armed factions and the Lebanese security forces. For instance, Allès notes that in Tripoli during the civil war, 'Water was used as a weapon and the fighters from Zgharta damaged the pipes channelling the water from the Rachaine spring to Tripoli. The city experienced severe water shortages, particularly in its more elevated quarters' (2012: 398). During the 2006 'July war', Israel targeted the Jiyeh power plant, resulting in the destruction of a fuel storage unit and thousands of tonnes of oil spilling into the Mediterranean Sea (Issam Fares Institute, 2017: 20; Hasbani, 2011: 12). '[S]everal poles and substations in the south' were also destroyed, 'as well as water stations and pipes' (Verdeil, 2008: 11). Similarly, in 'summer 2007, during the siege of Fatah al-Islam in the Nahr al-Bared camp by the Lebanese Army, the Islamist fighters targeted successfully the Deir al-Ammar power plant', reducing the country's ability to generate electricity (Verdeil, 2008: 11; see also Hasbani, 2011: 12).

Infrastructural inequality

However, sectarianism is only one aspect of the distribution of public services in Lebanon. The uneven geographical distribution of public services – between Beirut and the rest of Lebanon, but

also within the capital's metropolitan region – is a common theme in the literature. Especially Verdeil (2008, 2009, 2016, 2018) shows how this distribution exacerbates other forms of vulnerability and exclusion in a number of contexts. Noting that sectarian narratives 'permeate public discussions about the city's unequal access to basic services', he argues these fail to address fully the real reasons behind unequal distribution, 'particularly obscuring the class dimensions of the problem' (2016: 163). Elsewhere he writes, 'The catastrophic mismanagement of urban services thus contributes, above all, to widening the country's already frightening social inequalities' (2018: 107).

Arsan (2018) describes the economic impact of lacking public services. As residents must constantly make up for infrastructural gaps or supplement them with alternative, informal or private, sources, they pay significantly more for basic service provision: '[T]his lack of public amenities has inevitable effects on private incomes. For all, rich and poor alike, are forced to pay – sometimes twice, once to the state and again to private providers – for essential services, run by private operators' (Ibid: 249). But of course, those on low incomes are much more affected: 'All of these expenses, large and small, quickly add up, only increasing the wearying, pressing weight of the everyday' (Ibid: 250). Similarly, Baumann (2019) describes the severe economic inequality of post-war Lebanon as the 'backdrop' to the 'recent rise in popular mobilization against the failure of public services' (Ibid: 67). Asymmetrically distributed wealth and income also maps onto the manner in which Lebanese access services: 'Much of the top 10 percent of income earners in Lebanon can afford alternatives to the poor condition of public services, such as health, education, water, and electricity. Poorer Lebanese are more reliant on patronage resources doled out by politicians or confessional charities.' These services, in turn, 'are a way of reproducing sectarian identities' in addition, of course, to 'societal advantage be[ing] reproduced' across generations (Ibid: 69).

The International Crisis Group (2015) also argues that the absence of public services forces the Lebanese to resort 'to privatised alternatives' in 'virtually all sectors, from health, electricity and water to more complex activities such as education, employment, justice and even security'. Additional negative effects of ad-hoc and privatised solutions, beyond the financial cost borne by residents, will be outlined in more detail below – health risks (when rubbish is burned, when quality of trucked water is not monitored, exhaust from generators), increased pollution (private vehicles in lieu of public transport, generators, waste dump sites), and depletion of resources (private boreholes lowering the water table and quality of groundwater, networks losing water and power due to inefficiencies).

Refugees' and migrants' vulnerability

The ambiguity of the Lebanese state's laws emerges in literature discussing relations between the state and displaced or migrant populations, in the past as in the present. Arbitrary and vague regulations for, and support of, Palestinian refugees arriving in Lebanon in 1948 and 1967 and long thereafter, put their wellbeing at the mercy of the shifting political climate (Sayigh, 1979: 112). Research on Syrian refugees in Lebanon argues that since the state tightened its policy on asylum and residency in 2014, and with constantly changing regulations thereafter, the lack of clarity and coherence in granting refugees legal status left them in the dark over reasons for rejection or their entitlement to humanitarian aid (Human Rights Watch, 2016: 21-23). This ambiguity in itself leads to increased informality in migrants' status and experiences (Lebanon Support, 2016). Thus, as Saghieh (2015) argues, vulnerability is also 'manufactured' through the state's legal practices.

This manufactured vulnerability can also emanate from the way in which 'vulnerability' is operationalised as a humanitarian concept, due to both its fuzziness and its exclusionary nature. Janmyr & Mourad (2018) examine the various 'labels' applied to Syrians in Lebanon and how these categorisations shape possibilities for those to whom they are applied. They find that 'vulnerability' is an increasingly important criterion to determine eligibility for aid or resettlement, but that the conditions one must

fulfil to be labelled as ‘vulnerable’ are opaque. Echoing older critiques of the ill-defined use of ‘vulnerability’ in development discourses (ie. Chambers, 1989), Verme et al. (2016) also note the elastic nature of the term. Their study of the welfare of Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon, finds that ‘[h]umanitarian organizations use the term vulnerability in a broad sense and for multiple purposes’ (Ibid.: 22). While financial and non-monetary vulnerability are ‘not necessarily related’, they are often conflated in humanitarian and development programmes (Ibid.: 10-11). Janmyr’s study of the hierarchy of protection for various categories of Syrian refugees in Lebanon finds that this lack of clarity thus adds an ‘additional layer of uncertainty’ for already-precarious refugees (Janmyr 2018: 412).

This uncertainty about how many vulnerable Syrians Lebanon is hosting may also serve strategic purposes, as the state seeks to emphasise its own vulnerability vis-à-vis donor countries. Janmyr & Mourad (2018: 556) write:

‘The Lebanese government perceives a utility in expanding and contracting the category of refugee depending on the context. For reasons of residency, it employs a more limited definition that relies on UNHCR registration whereas, for donor and funding purposes, the emphasis is placed on the more expansive definition.’

Similarly, Nassar and Stel (2019: 44) note ‘the political utility of maintaining uncertainty and precariousness’ with regard to Syrian refugees’ status in Lebanon. The institutional ambiguity around the refugee response allows the state to expel refugees where it deems useful and evade responsibility overall.

Janmyr & Mourad (2018) further show how notions of ‘vulnerability’ and ‘the implicit ordering they create’ reinforce categories of deservingness. This analysis reflects the concern expressed in the wider literature that the increasing deployment of term is a means of restricting aid to certain sub-groups of refugees (cf. Hruschka & Leboeuf, 2019; Sözer, 2020). In this line of argument, the ‘vulnerability criteria’ deployed by states and humanitarian actors serve to essentialize ideal refugees and reify categories without reference to the specific context (Janmyr, 2018: 412; cf. Fiddian-Qasbiyeh, 2017; Sözer, 2019). As a result, the critical humanitarianism literature argues, when aid discourse considers ‘vulnerability’ a quality inherent to those exhibiting certain personal characteristics, this can create blind spots for those who do not meet the criteria. Thus, an NGO report (International Rescue Committee, 2016) highlights how gendered assumptions make male Syrian refugees in Lebanon – often considered less vulnerable than women and children – particularly vulnerable (cf. Turner, 2019).

Another effect of the state’s vagueness and inconsistency position toward (forced) migrants is the investment of state-like powers in Lebanese citizens, who are charged with deciding when and whether to implement the script of the law. In her ethnography, Kassamali (2019) describes the emergence of a ‘clandestine paper-fixing’ sector mediating between illegal migrant workers from Africa and Asia and the General Security. She argues that the kafala (sponsorship) system of employment and residency renders the employer-citizen (kafeel) as metonymic with the Lebanese state. Applying also to Syrian informal workers in Lebanon, the power invested in the kafeel, and the unequivocal solidarity between public servants and such employer-citizens, enable rampant exploitation and extortion, creating legal, economic and spatial realms of informality. The personification of state authority in particular individuals like public servants at the General Security offices, prison guards and employers brings to light the state effects on migrants’ daily experiences (Kassamali, 2019) and the narrow opportunities available to them to respond to exploitation and harassment (Pande, 2012). What appears missing from the literature is more in-depth discussion of the way precarious migrants and refugees are integrated into Lebanon’s pervading clientelist and patronage system. A qualitative study of conflict between Syrian refugees and host communities in the Bekaa by Al-Masri (2015) touches on the topic. She highlights the role of local patronage networks in providing some safety to

refugees, noting however that these vital relations are ‘not in themselves free of exploitation’ (Ibid: 17).

(Forced) migration and infrastructural vulnerability

Both Lebanese government institutions and UN agencies conceptualise the presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon as a factor exacerbating vulnerability by exerting pressure on scarce resources. Thus, the map widely used by international aid organisations to allocate resources across the country based on relative ‘vulnerability’ includes the ratio of refugees to Lebanese citizens in order ‘to highlight the potential degree of population pressure on services and resources’ (Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon, 2015). In UN reports, ‘competition for resources’ is frequently foregrounded as a source of tension between refugees and the host community (UNICEF, UNHCR & WFP, 2019: 38). This framing, in which refugees increase the vulnerability of the Lebanese state, is echoed in public perceptions. A survey conducted for UNDP found that the vast majority of Lebanese agreed with statements such as, ‘The presence of so many Syrian refugees in Lebanon today is placing too much strain on Lebanon’s resources, like water and electricity’ (ARK, 2017).

In contrast to these pervasive narratives of refugees as drains on local resources and passive recipients of aid, Fawaz, Gharbieh, et al. (2018: 6) have argued that we must ‘recognize the agency of individuals who against all odds are capable of intervening as active city-makers’. As Chalcraft (2009) has shown, Syrian migrant workers played a significant role in Lebanon’s post-war economy, even prior to the war in Syria. With the additional numbers of refugees who have arrived since 2011, they have become so heavily embedded in service provision that they have become part of the human ‘infrastructure’ that makes a city function (cf. Simone, 2004). Syrian refugees make different kinds of contributions to services, as workers in construction (Chalcraft, 2009; see also Kalthoum, 2018) or waste management (Saleh, 2016; Saleh & Zakar, 2018), as janitorial staff (Longuenesse & Tabar, 2014), as proprietors of food and retail businesses (Harb et al., 2018), or as delivery drivers (Monroe, 2014; Fawaz, Salame & Serhan, 2018). Along with the thousands of migrant domestic workers who provide essential care work for families, these refugees both build and maintain the city, facilitating circulations like a living infrastructure. At the same time, as Yassine et al. (2019) note, refugees and migrants also create their own social infrastructures of support – helping facilitate the arrival of other refugees through networks of kinship and places of origin (see also Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020).



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Networked infrastructures

Water

While Lebanon enjoys significantly more rainfall than neighbouring countries, this does 'not translate into sufficient water supply' for residents (World Bank, 2009: iv). Not all households are connected to the public network, especially because water authorities have not permitted connections for informal settlements: only 85% of households overall, and 88% of the urban households are connected to the public water network, according to Verdeil, who also notes that, in winter, only 49% of urban households receive water daily, a number that decreases to 29% in summer (Verdeil, 2008: 5). On average, households receive water for only 6 hours per day in summer and 9 hours per day in winter (World Bank, 2009: iv-v). In addition, the quality of piped water is so bad that '52% of inhabitants never drink water from the public network' (Verdeil, 2008: 5). Low-income households and those outside Beirut 'are less likely to be connected to the public network' (World Bank, 2009: v). Verdeil argues that this inequitable distribution of water across Lebanon increases 'previous socio-economic urban inequalities and therefore can be considered as a factor of intensified fragmentation at the urban scale' (Verdeil, 2008: 5).

Households must thus often supplement the piped water from additional sources. This entails not only additional financial costs, but stress on the country's overall water resources, and its quality. A report by the Issam Fares Institute (2017) notes, 'in Beirut, Lebanon, the average household subscriber is charged 0.6 USD per 1m³, according to the formal water utility subscription terms. However, effectively the water is supplied at less than a third of the promised amount, resulting in residents effectively paying between 10 USD and 15 USD per 1m³ to satisfy their needs by supplementing with bottled water and water provided through tankers.' These costs increase during droughts (Issam Fares Institute, 2017: 19).

Baylouny and Klingseis (2018) show how household-level coping mechanisms used to fill the gaps of the public network exacerbate the vulnerability of the system at large, and diminish the availability of water as a common resource: '[H]uman actions have decreased the availability of water by an estimated 29 percent, resulting in increasing desertification' (Ibid: 108). Over-extraction from the coastal aquifers, especially through private wells, has caused the water table to drop to 'alarmingly

low levels', causing seawater intrusion (Baylouny & Klingseis, 2018: 111, see also Issam Fares Institute, 2017:19). These private wells are 'partly a legacy of the civil war, with militias maintaining their own water supply'. In addition to 650 wells used by the national grid, today there are 'at least 50,000 private wells in Lebanon' as well as an estimated '20,000 illegal wells in the environs of Beirut, mainly used by private truckers to deliver water around the city' (Ibid: 106).

While the quality of piped water is low, bottled water companies and freshwater tankers also may be obtaining water without licenses, 'meaning the quality of water distributed is not always monitored or assured' (Issam Fares Institute, 2017: 17-19), leading to potential health risks. However, refugees, especially those living in informal settlements, bear the brunt of the risk: 'Skin diseases and other waterborne illnesses are on the rise in the most concentrated refugee communities. Authorities fear cholera, scabies, hepatitis A and leishmaniasis have broken out [...] 40 percent of Syrians were suffering dysentery' (Baylouny & Klingseis, 2018: 111).

At the same time, lack of water and increased pollution have been increasingly blamed on the Syrian presence in recent years. The Ministry of Environment estimated an 8-12% increase in demand for water, noted a deterioration in water levels and water quality, as well as an 8-14% increase in wastewater generation due to refugees (Ministry of Environment, 2014: 4-5). According to Baylouny and Klingseis, an official at the Ministry of Energy and Water stated that '[b]ecause of the Syrians, a water balance that should have been negative in 2030 is negative now' (2018: 110). The official narrative is reflected in public attitudes as well, with several opinion polls finding that 'degradation of the quality and quantity of available water was identified as a threat created by the refugees' (Baylouny & Klingseis, 2018: 112). This perception is utilised by authorities and can further increase the vulnerability experienced by refugees. For instance, the Litani River Authority has become increasingly active in combating the pollution of the river since 2018. However, next to fining and sanctioning industrial polluters, it has blamed the presence of refugee settlements for the pollution and even expelled residents from informal tented settlements built along the banks of the river (El Amine, 2019).

The water problem is seen as entrenched in similar ways as that of other public services – with clientelism and sectarianism hindering the necessary reform. Allès (2012) examines the case of the only public-private partnership in the water sector in Lebanon, in which a 'subsidiary of the multinational company Suez-environnement was contracted to manage the drinking water service in the Tripoli Water Authority area' in a private-public partnership between 2003 and 2007. She argues that, 'while in theory the various management tools deployed by the private operator could have been expected to undermine clientelist networks' (Ibid: 406), in reality the company 'did also play the games of local elites, allowing them to keep their role as intermediaries between the administration and their clientele – at least when it was not against the company's own interests' (Ibid: 404). Thus, 'rather than ousting the local elites from water management in Tripoli, the introduction of a private actor reshaped the influence of networks inside the water authority' (Ibid: 406). Verdeil argues along similar lines, that the numerous problems encountered in the process demonstrate 'that water delivery and water management are a main source of power in the city' and the privatisation process threatened these established power-relations (Verdeil, 2008: 9).

However, the responsibility of international actors is also highlighted. Karim Eid-Sabbagh's (2015) PhD dissertation on the political economy of water in Lebanon refers to the insufficient water supply as 'constructed scarcity' (2015: 18), locating the onus of responsibility for failed post-war reconstruction of water infrastructure equally with the 'political culture of clientelism and corruption' and the 'development policy at large driven by neoliberal ideology'. The latter is promulgated by what he calls the 'International Development Complex' (Ibid: 18-19), members of which 'disregard the structural roots' of the dysfunctional water sector (Ibid: 21). The interaction between these two forces means that '[s]ocially and ecologically just and sustainable development is substituted for

large scale infrastructure production with ambiguous results' (Ibid: 20). A report by Riachi (2016) similarly finds joint responsibility for the failure to sustainably overhaul the water system and the depletion of groundwater with the Lebanese government and international funders. He concludes: 'Instead of addressing problems with affordable solutions [...] politicians, high-ranking bureaucrats and international development banks are focusing on expensive large-scale projects' (Ibid: 35).

In terms of work on potential solutions to the issues surrounding water infrastructures, Riachi (2014) proposes a range of policies that the national government should adopt to reverse overexploitation of groundwater and pollution. Sandra Frem's (2009) architecture thesis on Nahr Beirut shows how this river's history must be read in the context of the city's wider history. She describes the river as a 'hydrological infrastructure' as well as a landscape feature – it fulfils the function of a municipal boundary, an open sewer, and a transport infrastructure. She thus highlights the co-constitution of nature and urban space – an analysis echoed in Khazrik's (2016) artwork which notes the links between the contamination of the Beirut River and its function as a boundary 'exiling' displaced groups outside the Beirut municipality. Frem proposes a holistic approach to planning in which the river's infrastructural functions can be balanced with its civic and environmental roles.

Waste

Rizkallah and Sabbagh's (2014) report on solid waste management is the most comprehensive technical overview of the sector. They show that waste management in Lebanon is generally 'characterized by rudimentary "collect and dump" approaches' (Rizkallah & Sabbagh, 2014: 10). UNDP and the Ministry of Environment (2017) identified 341 active uncontrolled open dumpsites used to deposit municipal solid waste, as well as 263 inoperational sites. These pollute soil and groundwater, in addition to waste dumped directly into the sea (Osseiran & Azhari, 2017). The Issam Fares Institute (2017) names the following factors compounding the waste crisis since the 1990s: '[C]orruption within the sector, absence of legal framework, and weak law enforcement, exacerbated by increases in solid waste as a result of growing urban populations' as well as a complex web of stakeholders in the sector and a fragmented legal framework, which the report summarises (Ibid: 25).

The health effects of the lack of strategy for waste removal are significant – while longer-term effects of toxicity are more difficult to trace, the immediate negative impact of burning rubbish as a coping strategy when there is no waste removal has been documented. Morsi et al. (2017) examined the acute health symptoms of exposure to dump sites and waste burning among workers in the northern suburbs of Beirut. Comparing male workers exposed to these hazards in Dawra to a control group from Dekwaneh, they found a 'strong association between improper waste management and physical health' among workers. Doctors interviewed by Human Rights Watch (2017) also confirm this finding, saying they 'noted an increase in respiratory illness cases in areas that began burning waste after the 2015 waste management crisis.' This research, too, found a geographically uneven distribution of vulnerability and risk: While nine open burn dumps are located in the wealthiest areas, 150 are situated in the rest of the country. Thus, the 'open burning of waste in Lebanon has had a disproportionate effect on residents in lower income areas' (Human Rights Watch, 2017: 5, see also 45-48).

Artists and researchers Khazrik (2015) and Mansour (2018) have examined the longer histories of toxic waste in Lebanon, including the deposits of toxic waste during the civil war, but also the manner in which toxicity permeates land, sea, air – and, ultimately, humans – due to the absence of proper garbage management mechanisms. Khazrik's investigations are reflected in a number of her artistic and semi-fictional works, including excerpts from a script titled *When We Were Exiled, Water Remained* (2016), which excavates the (real) history of a scientific group tasked with documenting the toxic waste imported into the country, whose work was forcefully ended in 1995. Mansour notes that

'the trash crisis of 2015 is akin to the one of 1997 in the appeal for the closure of a highly contested landfill' – both only saw temporary solutions. Boutros (2015) makes a similar argument regarding the 1997 crisis, when Bourj Hammoud landfill was closed. Toxic landfills along Beirut's coastline, including the Costa Brava, Bourj Hammoud and Normandy sites, are used for land reclamation (and, eventually, real estate) purposes, essentially seeking to extract value from waste that poisons human and non-human life. These issues are also explored in Mansour's short film *Dreamland* (2018), which includes footage from German news broadcasts on toxic waste from Germany delivered to Lebanon during the civil war. Both Mansour and Khazrik refer to the work of Fouad Hamdan (1996), founder of Greenpeace in Lebanon, who published a report on the toxic waste trade from Italy. Early on in the post-war reconstruction process, Masri (1999) documented the lack of care for the environment, showing how many issues related to pollution and toxicity today are rooted in decisions (not) taken in the 1990s.

Stel and van der Molen (2015) examine a waste crisis which took place in 2012 in the Sur area. Focusing on the Palestinian gathering of Shabriha, which does not fall into UNRWA's area of responsibility, they argue that 'the vulnerability to the environmental effects of this waste crisis ultimately stems from a legacy of violent conflict' (387). In their focus on the 'nexus between conflict and environmental vulnerability' (Ibid: 401), the authors utilise an 'entitlements' approach to the community's vulnerability and argue that 'Shabriha's vulnerability to the environmental effects of the waste crisis resulted from the particular governance arrangements it found itself in' (Ibid: 401).

In 2015, the closure of the Na'ameh landfill caused severe disruption to waste removal. Although this 'garbage crisis' severely affected residents' everyday lives, it was seen as merely a symptom of much deeper political problems and thus culminated in protests against the government, corruption, and the sectarian system. Arsan (2018: 372-419) provides a detailed timeline of the events leading up to the protests, which were named after the Twitter hashtags they engendered – #tol3it_ri7etkun or #YouStink. He highlights the history of protest among the community living beside the Na'ameh landfill.

Abu-Rish (2015) traces the origins of the crisis back to the privatisation and deregulation of waste management during the post-war period when central governments 'saw in the fragility of local authorities an opportunity to enrich themselves and their big business allies'. This included agreeing to pay far above the global average price for 'waste management' services limited to dumping (Ibid: 37). According to him, activists who expanded the issues of protest beyond that of waste 'drew upon a long legacy of activism around issues of public space' (Ibid: 40) but created a 'new activist landscape' which supersedes these urban issues with 'a new set of questions previously hidden in the folds of sectarian and class conflict' (40). He argues that the YouStink protests challenge the usefulness of sectarianism as an 'analytic lens through which to view social dynamics in Lebanon' because both protestors and political elites respectively allied themselves across sectarian lines (Ibid: 40).

In contrast, AbiYaghi et al. (2017) argue that a 'sectarian ghost' informed even this anti-sectarian movement. During the YouStink protests, and in the proposed plans to resolve the garbage crisis, they say, clientelist and confessional issues shaped the debate: 'The geographical allocation of the landfills was soon tied to the alleged confessional prevalence within those areas, tied to the clientelistic way of allocating shares and benefits to the different political leaders and their followers' (Ibid: 83). Even though confessionalism was attacked through humour and irony, it coloured internal debates to the point of alienating participants from one another (Ibid: 84). Often these divisions were explained through narratives of 'infiltrators' (Ibid: 85-88).

Baumann (2019: 70) highlights the issue of clientelism in his analysis of the crisis, and argues that 'one important reason why the 2015 trash crisis mobilized strong popular protests around the so-called "You stink" movement' was the specific quality of waste removal when compared to other

public services: ‘unlike health, education, electricity, or water, there is no private alternative to waste collection. It is a public good that is not easily divided into, or provided as, a private good. It is thus not amenable to being used as a personalized patronage instrument.’ Khalil (2017) examines the mobilisation from the perspective of youth participation and digital media, whereas Kraidy (2016) examines the symbolism at work when YouStink made the ‘political rot hyper-visible’ by playing on the ‘symbolic capital of garbage, with its tropes of putrefaction, odor, dirt, nausea, disease, corruption’ (Ibid: 22).

While waste problems are endemic, and date back to the early 1990s, as several authors note, the Ministry of Environment (2014) highlights the presence of Syrians in the country as a contributor to the stretched waste sector (Ibid: 2) as well as to the increase in airborne pollution from increased traffic, burning of waste, and electricity generation (Ibid: 7-8). Yet Syrians also play a significant role in the processing of waste. Focusing on informal waste management, Saleh’s (2016) ethnographic account of a Beirut scrap metal yard employing Syrian workers shows how urban vulnerability – of both workers and the overall system – operates at the interface of local and global economies.

Two recent master’s theses examine Lebanon’s waste management systems after the 2015 crisis, as well as potential initiatives for positive change. Azzi (2017) provides an extensive overview of the waste management system in the Beirut Mount-Lebanon region from a legal and technical perspective. Studying six specific initiatives, he maps relevant formal and informal actors in detail. He notes that ‘waste management is more than a technical problem’ and thus also requires more comprehensive solutions; he highlights decentralisation as key (Ibid: 59). El Ksayer (2017) examines two projects, Antoura municipality’s waste management overhaul and Beirut Madinati’s pilot project, in terms of civil society’s ability to participate in waste management as a vehicle for democratic co-production.

Electricity

Outlining the historical development of electricity in Lebanon, Hasbani (2011: 5-10) argues that the expansion of the network ‘was used as a key element in a wider strategy for state- and nation-building’ during the Chehab presidency years (1958-64) (Ibid: 6). She reads the disruptions of the civil war as the origin for many issues facing the grid today, in particular illegal connections, which resulted from mass displacement – as displaced people without a residency card could not connect legally – and the inability of Électricité du Liban (EDL) employees to travel to work. In addition, ‘the electricity supply was often used as a weapon by militia to undermine opposing factions’ (Ibid: 7). Abu-Rish (2015), on the other hand, traces the origin of Lebanon’s frequent power outages back to the early 1950s, when they were a formal response to a reduction in prices forced through popular protest. In the post-civil war period, Verdeil (2009) notes the fluctuations of electricity supply: ‘Though considerably improved from a 6 hours per day supply after the civil war, the effective delivery of electricity in Lebanon never went longer than 22 hours a day at its best’ in late 2004. Since this high point, damage from the 2006 war, along with the increasing price of oil and lack of maintenance of old infrastructure, caused a decrease in daily supply (Verdeil, 2009: 10).

With few exceptions, EDL, established in 1964, holds the monopoly over power provision in Lebanon. It covers 90% of all customers and supplies approximately 75% of all electricity distributed (Hasbani, 2011). Although close to all households are connected to the network, the supply is insufficient to cover demand. EDL’s output amounts to about 1,500 Megawatts, while demand is estimated at 2,300 Megawatts (Ministry of Energy and Water, 2010). While much of this discrepancy is due to lack of generation capacity, 15% of power is lost due to technical inefficiencies (Ibid: 3). Electricity imports from Syria and Egypt made up 7.5% of power in the past – but this supply has fluctuated for political reasons. Thus, two power barges were installed in 2013 and 2014 which together ‘provide around

20% of Lebanon's electricity needs or approximately two additional hours of electricity supply' (Bouri & El Assad, 2016). Recent agreements to import power from Syria again have been framed as 'making up' for some of the 'drain' on the electrical system that Syrian refugees are assumed to constitute (cited in Arsan, 2018: 254-5).

As of mid-2019, Beirut receives 18 hours of provision, whereas other areas can suffer from power cuts of up to 16 hours. As various areas of greater Beirut fall under different jurisdictions, this 'contrast is particularly felt in the city's immediate suburbs, differentially affecting people living in the same urban fabric' (Verdeil, 2016: 160). This 'uneven geography' of electricity supply, both across the country and within Beirut, also 'reproduces existing social and political hierarchies' (Verdeil, 2016: 156-7). As the tariffs have not been updated since 1994, EDL is essentially subsidising any electricity provision on the national grid. Therefore, '[t]he power delivery timetable is clearly benefiting the wealthiest class in Lebanon' (Verdeil, 2009: 11) because those with higher supply of on-grid electricity de facto receive a higher subsidy from the state (Verdeil, 2016: 162; see also Verdeil 2018: 107). Verdeil also reads the reluctance to update prices as a means to 'prevent popular protest' (2018: 107). And indeed, issues around electricity have led to violence, as protests against insufficient electricity supply in the Beirut suburb of Chiyah during 2007-08 left nine people dead. While there was a sectarian dimension to these events, Verdeil traces their 'social roots' to the 'unequal supply of electricity' (Verdeil, 2009: 14). Notably, following these events, Hezbollah then 'made efforts to calm down popular anger and reaffirm a patron-client relationship by bringing in new generators' (Verdeil, 2016: 162).

In lieu of sufficient electrical supply across the board, people make do through alternative connections, including private or collective diesel generators and 'theft' through makeshift connections to the EDL network. Private diesel generators are estimated to provide a 37% share of the total electrical supply (Issam Fares Institute, 2017: 21), and over half of all households rely on them (World Bank, 2009). While the law prohibits private entities from selling electricity, the market is regulated by ministerial decree. Hasbani (2011: 22) reproduces a statement by the Ministry for Energy and Water which simultaneously disavows responsibility for the regulation of generator-derived electricity and provides 'guidelines' for a 'fair average price'. Thus, the legal framework of generators can be understood as a 'grey space' between legality and illegality (Verdeil, 2016: 166). Verdeil explains why generator suppliers are commonly referred to as 'mafias': their profits 'escape any kind of tax and state regulation', and because of the monopoly nature of their dominance they 'are defended by violent means and clients have little recourse against wrongdoings such as unjustified pricing and defaults. Rumours of politicians being involved in the business in their regional strongholds are numerous' (Verdeil, 2016: 169). Arsan shows how the 'generator mafia' has been able to exert political pressure vis-à-vis EDL and the Ministry of Energy (Arsan, 2018: 250-2).

Inadequate supply, the uneven geographical distribution of electricity, as well as the high costs of alternative sources, mean 'it is Lebanese consumers who pay – quite literally – the price' as Arsan (2018: 255) puts it:

'In 2015, the World Bank estimated that average household expenditure on electricity came to \$1,300 each year—and this in a country where the gross national income per capita is \$9,800. [...] these are charges that disproportionately affect those on lower incomes.' (Ibid.)

Beyond household use, the cost of the insufficient electrical supply has been examined by Stel and Naudé (2016), who show that, to entrepreneurs, 'electricity supply is a major or very severe constraint to doing business' (Ibid: 256). Bouri and El Assad (2016) calculate the direct and indirect economic cost of power outages to be 3.87 billion USD for 2014.

The use of generators also has significant negative health and environmental impacts. A study carried out in Hamra between 2010 and 2012 found that 'the use of diesel generators for only 3

hours per day accounted for 38% of the daily carcinogen exposure in the Hamra area of Beirut'. The impact is equivalent to 'smoking a few cigarettes per day' (Shihadeh et al., 2013: 4). Areas with longer power outages will have higher exposure to carcinogens (Ibid: 13). These health effects also disproportionately affect poorer areas, which have larger, subscription-based generators, rather than built-in generators that are 'black-boxed' in the construction of new apartment buildings, as Abi Ghanem (2018) notes.

People also make do through ad-hoc connections to the power network. Such 'theft' constitutes 20% of power 'lost' from the grid, while non-payment makes up 5% (Ministry of Energy and Water, 2010: 3, see also Arsan, 2018: 253). According to Verdeil, peripheral regions have much higher rates of such connections than metropolitan Beirut, and 'large commercial and industrial customers may account for a larger share of fraud than individual households' (Verdeil, 2009: 11). He argues that 'relationships of patronage' in the post-Taif era prevent enforcement of payments or sanctioning of electricity 'thieves' (Verdeil, 2009:12). While informally tapping into the EDL grid can be viewed as a coping mechanism to alleviate the vulnerability of insufficient supply, Abi Ghanem's (2019) examination of the 'electricity martyrs' in Shatila camp shows that it creates other vulnerabilities, as passers-by and untrained volunteers maintaining the informal connections frequently die of electrical shocks.

While the Issam Fares Institute argues that electricity generators are 'resilient' in their flexibility, its report also points out the high economic, health, and noise pollution costs – and the fact that some 12% of Lebanon's CO2 emissions originate from private generators (2017: 23). Recent research thus frames the electricity challenge not merely as one of expanding provision, but in the context of combating global warming. In a report based on an expert consultation, IGP and Chatham House (2019) summarise the social, political, and legal landscape, and outline possible avenues for more sustainable long-term energy provision in Lebanon. Arsan (2018), in contrast, summarises the repeated political attempts to reform the energy sector over the past decade, none of which have come to successful fruition (Ibid: 252ff, see also 145). Verdeil (2018: 102) shows how the legislation to privatise the energy sector, which was passed in 2002, has not been fully implemented despite repeated attempts – with the exception of some contested reforms to the distribution system (Ibid: 102-105). Hasbani discusses a range of obstacles impeding electricity sector reform, including the absence of political consensus, the lack of industrial interest in reform and public debate, a divided civil society, broken links between constituents and political leaders, as well as geopolitical factors (Hasbani, 2011: 27-32). Verdeil (2009) outlines why gas, explored as an option in the 1990s, has so far not gained a foothold in Lebanese energy production (Ibid: 4). He argues that states are vulnerable when designing transition policies – as they risk shortage, meaning their legitimacy can be 'challenged' (Ibid: 16). Verdeil also points out that local energy governance has been overlooked in much of the literature on the energy transition in the Middle East (Ibid: 17). To him, the recent increase in decentralised installation of power panels has raised important questions regarding the distribution of risk and benefit in any future energy developments (Verdeil in Abu-Rish et al., 2019).

The following section will examine in more detail how the infrastructural issues above intersect with, and exacerbate, refugee and migrants' vulnerabilities.



Migrant space and place: Confinement, mobility and contestation

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The spaces occupied by refugees and other migrants are frequently marked by the absence of services, or precarious links to public networks. This includes restricted access to transport infrastructures, in addition to divisive infrastructures that actively restrict movement. The restricted access to services and regime of unequal mobility thus simultaneously imposed on these communities limit both the spaces migrant and mass displaced communities are able to access, and their sense of place. In this way, vulnerability is institutionalised, by design or default, in spatial and social arrangements.

Addressing space, place and mobility together resonates with theory that problematises the dichotomy between space, conceived of as an open, neutral, and abstract canvas, and place, which is fashioned out of space and localised through embodiment, sensing and meaning (de Certeau, 1984; Basso, 1996; Low, 2009). Rather, we point toward the value of thinking the two together, as implicated in the complex politics relating inequality to human and material flows, be these through mobility/immobility, displacement/emplacement, or the movement of territorial conquest (Massey, 2005). Drawing on the experience of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank under Israeli siege and on the displacement of Iraqis during the Gulf War, Peteet (2012) puts involuntary displacement and forced emplacement on a single spectrum, with both equally implicated in the condition of refuge, which national, ethnic or imperial projects of exclusion deploy. The inability to escape such violence is thus as much a source of vulnerability as being forcibly evacuated from one's home and becoming an outsider elsewhere. Meanwhile, with the prevalence of a camp-less 'refugeeness' in the region's contemporary moment of displacement, she asks, and answers herself: 'Do the displaced run the risk of becoming invisible, atomized exiles rather than a self-conscious aggregate with a potential voice and identity? It is important to note that while camps can contain and govern refugees in repressive ways, these small spaces are also imprinted by refugees and provide spaces for formulating new subjectivities as well as places from which to organize politically' (Peteet, 2012: 147).

Migrant settlements, slums and camps

The spaces out of which, and within which, mobility/containment is exercised figure in the literature on the settlement of displaced people and migrants as occupying the poorest and most neglected urban areas, including informal settlements or slums. The increasing camplessness of the refugee condition, which affected Iraqi and Syrian refugees in Lebanon, means they more frequently dwell in such neglected informal spaces, with the conditions that govern these areas affecting them as well. Considering the space of camps as a space of exception, in keeping with Agamben (1998), has therefore come under some challenge, both explicitly as a proposition and in research methodology (Schiocchet, 2014; Stel, 2014). In her research on Palestinian camps in Beirut, Martin (2015) argues that 'clear-cut distinctions between the refugee and the citizen do not exist' and 'bare life is not confined to the spaces of the camp but exceeds its boundaries', producing what she calls 'campspaces' where camps and informal settlements meet or overlap. Similarly, Ramadan (2013) critiques the Agambenian view of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon from the perspective of hybrid sovereignties: 'Studies of real-world refugee camps cannot be reduced to a formulaic reading of spaces of exception filled with silenced and disempowered homines sacri' (Ibid: 68). He argues that Palestinian '[c]amps in Lebanon are complex, exceptional through an "absence or weakness" rather than an intensification of sovereign state power'. They are, in his view, 'enclaves in which state, non-state and international actors all exercise power and contribute to the suspension of the law' (Ibid: 69).

Fawaz and Peillen (2003) for their part have mapped and described the typology and historical evolution of Beirut's slums based on the original residents' places of provenance, including rural-urban migrants, those internally displaced by war, and international refugees settling in camps. They define slums broadly as 'areas of the city where the majority of residents live in precarious economic and/or political conditions, with high levels of vulnerability, and where services and living conditions appear to be lower than other sections of the city' (Ibid: 7), a definition that applies to camps and non-camp areas of vulnerability. On the conditions that prevail in these slums, they write:

'All slums combine a varying percentage of precarious, tin sheet and wooden houses with more solid and permanent structures. All slums also contain houses serviced in varying degrees, going from legal electricity and water hook-ups, to illegal hook-ups or the absence of these services altogether' (Ibid: 8).

They chart how most slums, constituting affordable housing, gradually also begin housing migrant workers (Ibid: 23-24).

While refugees, migrants, and impoverished Lebanese citizens may inhabit the same spaces in these informal areas and have similar infrastructural needs, their differing legal status creates distinctions in terms of their access to support. Carpi's (2015) ethnographic work in Hay al-Gharbe, an informal settlement bordering Shatila camp, finds that non-governmental actors 'neglected areas of severe chronic vulnerability and urban poverty' unless they were related to 'war and violence'. While refugees were viewed as eligible for aid, Lebanese residents thus fell through the cracks of international and sectarian aid provision. In this analysis, 'vulnerability is configured as a lack of social connections, influence, resources, and, in particular, contact with external human capital' (Ibid.).

The literature also links political autonomy to infrastructural viability and maintenance (Peteet, 2009; Cornish, 2018; Knudsen, 2018). For instance, Khalidi and Riskedahl (2010) show that during the Lebanese civil war and up until 1982, Palestinian refugees had the ability to organise politically and govern the camp spaces (more clearly defined as such in those days); they also enjoyed a more central role and place in the Lebanese national and political sphere. This directly impacted the infrastructural viability and maintenance of their settlements, which began deteriorating in 1982 with the PLO's withdrawal (Fawaz & Peillen, 2003: 12). During the post-war era, however, Palestinian

refugees experienced increased marginalisation as ‘social punishment’ and continue to live in a ‘stifling situation’ without the most basic civil rights (Khalidi & Riskedahl, 2010: 3). As such, the Lebanese state provides space but not place for Palestinian refugees within its nation-state, their condition being defined by legal status, spatio-social stigma and political isolation, including from other Palestinian diasporas, and from the Palestinian territories (Khalidi & Riskedahl, 2010: 6). Although most Palestinians want Lebanese citizenship in order to access civil rights, mainstream political discourse claims this would amount, on the one hand, to granting them political rights that threaten Lebanon’s delicate sectarian balance, and, on the other, to diluting their right of return to Palestine (Peteet, 2009; Cornish, 2018). On these grounds, the state has routinely withheld public services and infrastructure, as well as property ownership rights and work (stability), which renders easier the clearance or destruction of camps that are deemed inconvenient (economically, territorially), non-strategic (for security or during armed conflict) or otherwise undesirable, as was the case with Tel al-Zaatar camp in 1976, and Nahr al-Bared camp in 2009 (Knudsen, 2018).

A comparative study of Palestinian refugees living inside camps across the Arab region, in Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon, establishes a direct proportionality between spatial isolation or confinement, and high levels of poverty (Hanafi et al., 2012). The study measures poverty within Palestinian refugee communities relative to general poverty levels in the host country, correlating it to discrimination in the job market, forms of governance in the camp, and the type of settlement, be it a distinct camp with fluid or highly-demarcated boundaries or an unmarked cluster of refugee housing. The study finds Lebanon to rank highest in job discrimination, and the isolation/confinement of Palestinian refugees in settlements, in relative poverty (comparable to the West Bank), and in addition ranking poorly in internal governance (Hanafi et al., 2012: 39). The study claims refugee camps in Lebanon and Palestine are overall poorer than those in other Arab countries as a result of their enclosure and the spatial rupture created by obstructive or securitised barriers controlling movement in and out. In Syria and Jordan, camps are more integrated in their urban contexts. Even though Palestinian camp dwellers in Lebanon may be as socially and politically connected to their contexts as their counterparts in Syria and Jordan, or even more so, the spatial rupture of cantonised camps nevertheless affects access to labour opportunities and sustainability by obstructing sociability and mobility, and increasing stigma about work reliability (Shaaban, 2002; Hanafi et al., 2012).

In Palestinian camps, which do not receive services from the state, UNRWA is the main service provider and employer. As the International Crisis Group (2009: 22) puts it, ‘in effect, it is a substitute for the absent Lebanese state’. The semi-official Popular Committees fulfil ‘municipal functions such as providing water and electricity, collecting social contributions in return for such services’ (Ibid). However, ‘[t]he committees are further hampered by political divisions and rivalries which, in some instances, have led to the establishment of competing bodies loyal to the PLO and Tahaluf. Moreover, each committee spawns a myriad of sub-committees that have become arenas for inter-factional competition and whose work on specific issues (safety, water, healthcare, education and information) is often uncoordinated, frequently duplicative and sometimes contradictory’ (Ibid). Mahoudeau’s PhD dissertation (2018) examines the political landscape of Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut in the post-civil war period through a spatial lens. As he argues, electricity, water and waste play a significant role in the mobilisations to address the ‘problem of the camps’. Beyond services, informal development has also been key to creating the current spatiality of the camps: Maqusi (2017) coins the term ‘spatial violation’ to denote the informal construction beyond the plots of 100m² initially allocated to each household by UNRWA. She offers a chronology of the gradual encroachment and expansion that ‘transgress[es] humanitarian regulations’ and creates a ‘Palestinian scale’ (Ibid: 2-3).

The so-called ‘adjacent areas’ on the outskirts of four Palestinian refugee camps, Ain al-Hilweh, Mieh Mieh, Beddawi and Nahr al-Bared, are particularly vulnerable in terms of service provision as they are informal and do not have official UNRWA camp status. They have ‘no provision of basic urban

services by the state (public agencies and municipalities), UNRWA or other institutions' (UNDP & UN Habitat, 2010: 8). While their residents make do through informal practices and self-help initiatives, there are 'huge gaps and shortfalls' (Ibid: 8-9). The lives of those living in these areas are made more precarious by the sensitive political situation, as service provision would be seen as state institutions accepting Palestinians' permanent settlement (tawtin) on Lebanese soil (Ibid: 9). Yet at the same time infrastructural failures in these areas, such as sewage leaks, potentially also affect adjacent camps and formal municipal areas – meaning the specific vulnerability of residents of these 'grey spaces' (cf. Yiftachel, 2009) also makes the wider city-camp conglomerate vulnerable to infrastructural spillovers.

Lebanon's policy of non-encampment vis-à-vis Syrian refugees is argued to be based on the experience of Palestinian camps becoming permanent (Fakhoury, 2017). Due to this policy, the majority of Syrian refugees live in urban spaces. Approximately one fifth live in informal tented settlements (ITSs), which are non-permanent shelters, usually in agricultural or peri-urban settings. According to the UN, in late 2018, there were 5,669 such ITS sites with approximately 268,000 inhabitants (Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon, 2019a: 1). Sanyal (2017) argues that service provision in ITSs is irregular and uneven, with different patchworks of international agencies and NGOs providing various services. Residents of ITSs are especially at risk of forced evictions, often for security reasons (Fawaz et al., 2014; Human Rights Watch, 2018). In 2018, 6% of Syrian refugee households were evicted (UNICEF, UNHCR & WFP, 2018: 50) – the vast majority of such evictions take place due to tenants' inability to pay the rent (Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon, 2019b). Collective evictions, however, are more likely to be due to authorities' orders. Almost all (95%) of these evictions target the residents of ITSs (Ibid).

Despite the policy of non-encampment there is a small number of formalised camps for Syrian refugees, which are run by a Lebanese association called URDA. Kikano and Lizarralde (2019) argue that residents of these few formal camps in Lebanon, such as al-Awda Camp near Bar Elias, live in 'more favorable conditions' than urban refugees and enjoy free services. Sanyal (2017), however, foregrounds the securitised nature of al-Awda camp. While it is thus acknowledged that much of the vulnerability refugees face is linked to the spatio-legal circumstances in which they find themselves, many humanitarian mechanisms for assessing refugees' vulnerability nonetheless conflate it with economic precarity (Verme et al., 2016: 10-11).

Transport, mobility, and social inequality

The signification of mobility for vulnerability extends beyond access to, or integration into, transport systems and by extension the labour economy and access to other services. It also implicates the hold of state and non-state actors on territory through the development of land, including transport infrastructure. Infrastructural projects such as highway construction threaten slums and informal settlements such as Ouzai, Jnah and Hay al-Sellom, Hay Madi and Haret Hreik, to name a few where low-income residents including Lebanese war displaced and non-citizen migrants of various nationalities are most likely to live, and become evicted in line with modernist urban policies of slum-clearance. According to Deboulet and Fawaz (2011), the construction of highways can be conceived by policymakers as a way of dealing with illegal neighbourhoods located on sites attractive for development (Ibid: 124), thus constituting 'the highways' hidden agenda' by which the state expands its power in contested suburban territories (Ibid: 125). Members of local sectarian (religious-political) communities (in this case predominantly Shiite) have some leverage to protest or negotiate adjustments to, or compensation for, such projects through party representation or clout, such negotiation in turn strengthening and reproducing communal belonging (Ibid: 119). Yet migrant workers from Syria, Africa and Southeast Asia who rent there are entirely excluded from this process by members both of the community and of government (Ibid: 126). Bou Akar (2011) discusses how spatial configurations wrought through competing scrambles for cheap developable land between

developers with rival political and sectarian allegiances served to gentrify entire areas in Beirut's southern outskirts. Where these war-torn areas were once to be found along sectarian fault-lines and enclaves, 'a "war in times of peace" logic of development' completed the dispossession of the remaining residents – including mostly war-displaced squatters and low-income tenants – that military conflict had begun (Bou Akar, 2011: 110).

The significations of mobility for vulnerability also speaks to regimes of securitisation that inscribe segregation and discrimination into various landscapes. Nucho points out, 'Just as channels and infrastructures serve to create spaces of connection and conjoined action, they also serve to differentiate, subtract, or reroute people and things' (Nucho, 2016: 5). This point is well substantiated in other colonial settings of the Global South, for example in Czeglédy's (2004) account of the way urban design and its emerging differential modes of transportation serve to prolong racial and class inequalities and segregation in (post-)apartheid contexts such as Johannesburg. In Beirut, Monroe (2011) explores the ways mobility produces conspicuous hierarchies of bodies along gendered, national, racial and class lines. It does so in an urban landscape that is already highly securitised (Fawaz, Harb & Gharbieh, 2012). The security barriers restricting the free movement of Syrian food delivery-men on scooters, and the barring of migrant domestic maids from entering beach resorts or making use of facilities such as swimming pools (when they do enter to care for employing families), in contrast to the largely free access of middle- and upper-income Lebanese men and women to all parts of town, exemplify the interrelation between mobility, citizenship and prestige before spatial regimes of social differentiation (Monroe, 2011: 95; Pande, 2012: 10; Kanafani, 2017: 136). There are also accounts of nocturnal curfews or total bans from public spaces that various Lebanese towns and villages have imposed on foreign migrant workers, especially Syrians, under the pretext of protecting them from attack or local communities from their threatening presence. Traboulsi and Adnan document the curfew banners that hang in the streets, as well as other banners that protest this constraint in solidarity with refugees and migrants, calling the two forms of public signage 'banners in dialogue' (2018: 83). El Helou (2014), meanwhile, argues these manifestations of discrimination and scapegoating, and the penalties inflicted on anyone who goes against them, as sanctions of violence against refugees and vulnerable members of host communities alike.

Nabti (2004) notes that Beirut's inner-city electrical tramway and Lebanon's intercity railway once constituted pillars of the country's 100-year-long experience with public transport systems, which went into decline with the rise of automobility, collapsing entirely when civil war broke out in 1975. This gave rise to a 'fluid network' of roads, and thus to a fragmented city, with multiple centres that shape and are shaped by Lebanon's fragmented politics (Bernier, 2010). Nabti notes also that while Ottoman rule intended the railway to connect Lebanon to regional centres such as Istanbul and Damascus, the French mandate's prioritisation of car infrastructures helped undo this orientation, revealing how transportation and its infrastructures do not simply impact mobility, but reflect 'different chapters in the region's histories, both in terms of planning theory and in terms of constructed (or destructed) infrastructure' (Nabti 2004: 17). Tfaily (2019) discusses the social differentiation noticeable in discourses and attitudes that stigmatise and denigrate public transportation in Lebanon, especially the bus system, which is widely used by Syrian refugees and migrant workers because it is the cheapest means to get around. Of the spectrum of transport systems, formal or informal, past or even imagined for the future, Tfaily notes how an actually functioning and widely used, although by no means perfect, service lacks recognition or visibility within the state and among the middle class.

Public space, popular markets and sense of place

Perry argues that a rise in 'car culture', in line with dominant trends in America, caused urban policies to sideline pedestrian urban experiences and neglect sidewalks and public spaces to such an extent that the city lost its nodes of collective encounter and communal leisure (Perry, 2000: 399-401). In

this vein, public space in Lebanon has been described as under threat, increasingly inaccessible, or selectively accessible to particular publics, due to privatisation (Roy, 2009; Fawaz, 2009; Sawalha, 2010; Nahnoo, 2012; Saksouk-Sasso, 2015), securitisation (Fawaz, Harb & Gharbieh, 2012; Monroe, 2016) and fragmentation (Bernier, 2010; Hafeda, 2011; Mermier, 2013). The deterioration of Lebanon's public spaces is attributed in some literature to the rise of automobility (Nabti, 2004; Bernier, 2010; Monroe, 2011; Kanafani, 2017). Nazzal and Chinder (2018) provide a historical overview of the development of public spaces in Lebanon that includes a rare focus on the northern city of Tripoli amid predominantly Beirut-centric scholarship. Khalili (2016) includes a concise historical section on the popularisation of leisure in public promenades and beaches in Lebanon in her article on young Palestinian women's leisure practices.

Some literature discussing Lebanese public space claims it is a site of contestation over political ideology and national identity, fought along sectarian lines – the predominant analytic in much of the academic work (Khalaf & Khoury, 1993; Nagel, 2000; Mermier, 2013). But there are also analyses along class (Assi & Carter, 2017), gendered (Saleh, 2017; Deeb & Harb, 2013; Moussawi, 2018; see also Merabet 2014) and racial/ethnic lines (Nagel 2000; Pande, 2012; Kassamali, 2019). Mady (2015) gives an overview on the pre-war, wartime and post-war signification of public space, with a focus on memory, suggesting Lebanese national identity is threatened by a contemporary rise in consumerism. Struggles over the city and over territorial boundary-making, which are examined by Hafeda (2019), are also struggles over conflicting notions of 'Lebaneseness', as attested by Mermier for instance, when he highlights how the war-displaced Shiite residents of Beirut took a central role in the identitarian duality of the city, when the community rose from pre-war marginality and deprivation to political and economic power in the mid-2000s (Mermier, 2013: 279-380). Saksouk-Sasso (2015) claims the Lebanese state is 'either disinterested in or openly at war with' public spaces such as Dalieh, a 140,000 m² property located on Beirut's seafront on an unbuilt peninsula, which is privately owned but whose sale to the private sector decades ago is contested by activists; these spaces 'go from being neglected to viewed as lucrative investment' (Ibid: 299). Meanwhile, a range of publics – mostly lower income residents including refugees and migrant communities (old and new) – exercise communal sovereignty over such 'leftover' sites, which activists have in turn deployed as 'a platform for representing these low-income groups as a legitimate part of the public, and of the city' (Ibid: 314).

Struggles over access to green spaces have been interpreted optimistically as partially successful for claiming (back) public space while laying the groundwork for future civil dissent against state actors' usurpation of such space (Assi & Carter, 2017: 40-41). Less optimistic literature depicts such struggles as defeated by state hegemony over public space and dominant (elite) public opinion alike (El Halawani, 2017). Meanwhile, Shayya's edited volume (2010) critiques the initial inaccessibility of Beirut's pine forest, Horsh Al-Sanawbar, the capital's largest green and public space, which the municipality closed off for a decade after its post-war restoration. Taking the Horsh as entry point, the volume sheds light on the exclusionary governance of what remains of public space in Beirut more generally (Ibid: 14) and arguably other Lebanese cities. One contribution by Al-Amine, for instance, argues such governance is based on the state's self-appointed role as protector of the 'city of the civilized' from 'the city of savages', or users who presumably lack the essential capacity to "'respectfully and neatly enjoy nature'" and instead engage in the 'intolerable' practices of littering and love-making in the woods (Al-Amine, 2010: 31). Likewise, in Mermier's discussion the denigration of marginal urban spaces and the people who frequent them, including with popular markets (see more below), involves their being perceived as 'dangerous classes' (Mermier, 2017: 25; an idea borrowed from Traboulsi, 2014). From the perspective of users, Asfour's contribution argues these practices represent a 'wrinkling' (a resistance) against formal control; they 'do not aim at destruction, but rather diverge from the prescribed usage and behavior' (Asfour 2010: 36). In describing the pleasure young Palestinian women take in leaving the surveilled confines of Beirut's camps for leisure in various public places, Khalili proposes these are neither acts of depoliticised

consumerism nor ordinary resistance. Instead, she reads them as practices that derive meaning in the context of historic denigration and restriction, as ‘acts of conviviality; of placing oneself within a collective and feeling – however fleetingly – a life lived in common’ (Khalili, 2016: 593).

The discussion about access to public spaces for leisure identifies a contest between various ‘publics’, especially marginalised users and those with powerful claims over such spaces, while the literature on popular markets reveals a more complex dynamic of cooperation and competition between all who have economic, political or social stakes in them. A rare in-depth study of the country’s 55 local souks (markets) that flourished in the past 20 years (Taher, 2018: 2, 124) reveals the vulnerabilities of and dynamics between local low-income populations and migrants. These markets have served as significant infrastructures of trade and sources of livelihood for all users, especially during Lebanon’s suspension of parliamentary elections for nine years, which exacerbated unemployment and an economic crisis. In addition, the influx of Syrian traders and goods led to heightened economic competition that increased the vulnerability of foreigners (and especially Syrians) who became unwelcome, perceived as the cause of bad business (Taher, 2018: 28). Ethnographic accounts depict Lebanese vendors as blaming any deceleration in business on competition from the presence of many foreign vendors (particularly Syrian, but also Palestinian, Iraqi, Egyptian and other). This includes their alleged smuggling in of cheaper wares, lack of formal avenues of registration/rent of space (Krijnen & Pelgrim, 2014), or suspect vending strategies (Taher, 2018: 111). As such, literature on commercial enterprises attests to contentions along national lines between citizens and migrants – Mermier terms this the ‘conflation between “foreigners” and “poverty”’ prevalent in Lebanese public opinion (Mermier, 2017: 19).

Concentrated in the coastal cities and larger towns in the hinterland, Lebanon’s souks are governed by a combination of public and private institutions and interests, whose political, economic and social stand-offs often shape claims over and the spatial management of the markets (Krijnen & Pelgrim, 2014; Mermier, 2017; Taher, 2018). As sites of political organising and positioning, souks are instrumental to already existing political rivalries, and serve as sites of resistance or allegiance to particular political regimes (Taher, 2018: 104, 129, 131). In Souk Sabra, Beirut, for instance, Shibli attributes ‘insalubrious’ conditions and poor infrastructural management and lack of rehabilitation to poor coordination between the two rival municipalities within whose jurisdiction the souk falls (Shibli, 2015: 135).

Meanwhile, in their study of Souk al-Ahad, Krijnen and Pelgrim (2014) reveal a long-term dispute between local and central state authorities over ownership of the souk’s land, concealing competing economic agendas that affect foreign vendors and buyers. While the municipality denounces the foreign presence in the market, the souk’s private operator, under the tutelage of the Ministry of Energy and Water, highlights the souk’s importance ‘as a place where lower-income families’ can sell affordable items and afford to shop (Ibid.). Yet, when new (foreign) vendors set up shop beyond the souk’s wall, they are vulnerable because their presence is not instrumental to the two competing state authorities.

Some literature contends that expulsions of the commercial enterprises of marginalised groups, including migrants and the internally displaced, reflect class struggles in Lebanon’s past and present, and the stigma attached to informal trading. For instance, when the Lebanese civil conflict saw the dislocation and splintering of Beirut’s central commercial market into popular markets in particular enclaves (such as Bir al-Abed and Souk al-Ahad), these were subsequently vulnerable to further displacement (Mermier, 2017:19-21), often because of alleged clean-up strategies for tourism (Saksouk-Sasso, 2015: 303). According to Asfour, ‘Popular market places were allegedly deliberately targeted in developers’ economic warfare against the informality of the working class, for instance in the temporary Raouche seafront souk that served as substitute to Beirut’s wartorn commercial center in 1981’ (Asfour, 2010: 36-37). Mermier reports that the plans to dismantle Souk al-Ahad

include a vision to re-establish the market in the neighbourhood of Karantina, but with exclusively Lebanese vendors (Mermier, 2017: 25). Some sources view market dislocation as an extension of established slum clearance policies, where the state relies on large-scale infrastructural constructions such as highways (discussed above) to curb their growth (Fawaz & Peillen 2003: 31-32). Likewise, the maintenance of the informal markets in the 'backstage' of the city contains them 'outside the vision and space of elites and more dominant/legitimized sections of the population' (Mermier, 2017: 29).



Conclusion

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We have outlined here the way the insufficient provision of public services in Lebanon contributes to a range of vulnerabilities. Absent or failing water, electricity, and waste infrastructures have a negative impact on residents' health and wellbeing. The unequal distribution of existing services means that marginalised communities are often further excluded from access to those resources that facilitate everyday life, and must expend more energy on making up for the gaps in the formal system. The uneven distribution of resources via infrastructures and service networks is both a product and an active instrument in sectarian politics, as several authors describe. The burden of supplementing the national networks with private services is especially difficult to bear for poor residents. A dearth both of public transport and public spaces that are inclusive of migrant presence and participation also further exacerbates difficulties for those who live in dense or crowded conditions and lack funds either for private transport or for accessing privatised domains for exchange and consumption. While smaller-scale initiatives of upgrading infrastructure or planning for sustainable public services are occasionally discussed, with the exception of artistic pieces, few texts envision more sustainable futures for Lebanese infrastructures outside the limiting parameters of the current impasse.

Thus, while policy discourse emphasises the pressure exerted by displaced people on Lebanon's resources, they – along with other marginalised groups – are disproportionately burdened by the effects of insufficient public service provision. In fact, while some metrics consider the presence of refugees as making a community more vulnerable, others argue that migrants and refugees are the most vulnerable groups. Some of the works cited illustrate how marginalised migrants provide the services upon which wealthier residents rely, entangling them in unequal relations of dependency. Other work here reviewed illustrates the conditions that enable migrants to carve out precarious lives in the interstices of service economies and urban spaces. Future research could productively expand on the tension between the often privately experienced effects of lacking public services, and their longer-term impact on communities and commonly-held resources.

While different actors define vulnerability from a range of perspectives, the focus on public services draws together spatial and social issues. It is notable that vulnerability is discussed and located at a range of scales: Firstly, numerous authors focus on the fragility of the state and view its inability to provide for citizens through public services as a sign of this 'weakness'. Conversely, the focus on the 'resilience' of residents despite insufficient provision highlights how people come to make

do through their own support systems, without the support of the state. Another body of literature focuses on the role of infrastructure in the vulnerability of communities and the potential conflict between communities. The importance of sectarian politics in infrastructure development and service provision is seen to undermine the state's authority and strengthen inter-communal tensions through spatial exclusion, of which migrant communities often bear the most severe consequences. The presence of refugees is framed by state and humanitarian actors as a potential source of conflict over limited resources. Yet another set of writings locates vulnerability – frequently understood as economic precarity – at the household or individual level. As such, it appears more research on the inter-scalar and interdependent nature of vulnerability could be fruitful to advance the conversation.

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(Asterisk * denotes that a text is available in Arabic. If exclusively in Arabic, then title is transliterated.)

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Annex: Arabic glossary of relevant terms

There is generally a dearth of academic literature in Arabic that deals specifically with vulnerability as an outcome of or in relation to exclusion from infrastructural networks and public services in Lebanon's context of mass displacement. There is an enormous corpus of texts in Arabic journalistic reporting, however, this lies generally outside the scope of this review. Most non-journalistic Arabic-language references exist in the realm of humanitarian and policy reports (grey literature), which are often published in both Arabic and English, with some evidently written first in English and then translated into Arabic. Scholarly references in Arabic often rely heavily on established English (or French) references, making it difficult to identify a particularly Arabic-language genealogy of meaning of the intersecting concepts this review addresses. This glossary lists some of the terms that imply vulnerability, and which we encountered in both scholarly and non-scholarly literature available in Arabic, whether this was written as such or translated, including notes on their usage. While it is not exhaustive, it captures some of the Arabic terms with connotations relevant to the discussion of the vulnerability of mass displacement as it pertains to infrastructure, public service provision and wellbeing.

Arabic term & transliteration	English translation	Note on Usage
الهشاشة، هش al-hashāsha	fragility, brittleness	While literally vulnerability, rarely encountered as such.
العوز al-‘awaz	impoverishment, lack	Those (individuals/ communities) in an excessive state of impoverishment/lack. أشخاص في حالات العوز الشديد
الفقر (الفقراء) al-fuqr (al-fuqarā’)	poverty, the poor	Those who are poorest. الأكثر فقراً
المساكين al-masākīn	the destitute	In the Holy Quran, travellers, the poor and the destitute
الحرمان al-ḥirmān	privation	Usually figures as ‘the deprived,’ and is synonymous with ‘the poor.’ المحرومين

Arabic term & transliteration	English translation	Note on Usage
الحاجة al-ḥāja	need	Those who experience most need and incur most damage. الأكثر حاجة وتضرراً
الضعف al-ḍuʿf	weakness, feebleness	Those who are weaker or in a weak position. الذين في موقع الضعف او الأكثر ضعفاً
القهر al-qahr	defeat	In contexts of injustice, especially of Palestinian refugees.
المعاناة al-muʿānāt	suffering	As circumstances that increase suffering. يزيد معاناة
البؤس al-buʿs	misery	Slums (also informal settlements - ʿashwāʿīāt) (مساكن بائسة (عشوائيات)
الوطأة al-watʿa	pressure	Living under the pressure (of poverty, deprivation etc.). تحت وطأة
الخنقة al-khanqa	stifle	Stifling conditions especially of refugees in spatial/socio-economic containment (camps). وضع خانق
العيق al-ʿibq	burden	Widespread usage; that refugees incur on host communities.
المأساة al-māsāt	tragedy	Tragic conditions. وضع

Related terms

Arabic term & transliteration	English translation	Note on Usage
عدم الاستقرار 'adam istiqrār	instability	Widespread and general usage, as political/economic, and country-wide. عدم الاستقرار في البلاد
لا مساوات lā musāwāt	inequality	Widespread and general usage, as service distribution. لا مساوات في توفير خدمات
منكوبين mankūbīn	afflicted, distressed	Suffering loss, e.g. of home, nation, livelihood.
مكشوفين makshūfīn	exposed, susceptible, defenceless	Academic usage, e.g. susceptibility of Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

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